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FOR PM/DTCC - BLUE LANTERN COORDINATOR

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: ETTC KOMC PM

SUBJECT: PANAMA-BLUE LANTERN LEVEL 3 LICENSE 05-050023533

REF: STATE 203073

¶1. (U) On December 19, 2006, EconOff met with Jorge Aurelio Cohen Jaen (Panamanian I.D. number 8-140-115), President and sole shareholder of Panama Shooters & Arms Supplies, S.A. (PSAS), at PSAS's offices on Via Espana and Avenida La Loma, Centro Commercial San Fernando, Local # 16, Panama City, Panama.

¶2. (U) Cohen confirmed to EconOff PSAS's order to purchase the Walther handguns and ammunitions in the quantity and at the cost set forth in Reftel. Cohen said this was PSAS's first purchase from RSR Group, Inc. of Winter Park, Florida.

¶3. (U) Cohen told EconOff that PSAS is a wholesaler of handguns and rifles. Its regular customers are retail gundealers throughout Panama. PSAS's customers include the department store Machetazo. Most of PSAS's customers are located in Panama City. Cohen said PSAS has one gundealer client in Chiriqui. Cohen said PSAS does very limited retail business. Cohen said PSAS maintains a record with the names and addresses of each customer.

¶4. (U) Cohen told EconOff that the handguns and ammunitions listed in Reftel will be held in the Panamanian National Police's (PNP) ammunitions depot in Cerro Tigre. Upon arrival at Panama's Tocumen International Airport, Cohen along with members of the PNP will inspect the weapons and the PNP will transport the weapons to the PNP depot. According to Cohen, the weapons will be held in the PNP depot until they are sold to another gundealer. At such time, the PNP merely moves the weapons from the part of the depot allocated to PSAS to another part of the depot allocated to the other gundealer.

¶5. (U) PSAS is a Panamanian corporation doing business since 1991. In 2004, Cohen purchased his partner's (Roberto Alfredo Cowes Diaz (Panamanian I.D. number 8-131-373) 50% interest in PSAS, thereby becoming the company's sole shareholder. Cohen said PSAS has the appropriate Panamanian licenses to import and sell the weapons listed in Reftel. EconOff reviewed copies of PSAS's incorporation documents, its firearms license, and documents related to Cohen's purchase of Cowes' interest in PSAS. Cohen is the only corporate officer of PSAS. His wife and son work at the PSAS and his wife is a member of the board.

¶6. (U) Cohen said he was aware on the restrictions on re-export of the weapons listed in Reftel.

¶7. (U) An official at the GoP Ministry of Government and Justice told EconOff that PSAS had the requisite licenses and permits to import and sell firearms, including the weapons listed in Reftel, and that the Ministry has no derogatory information on the conduct of PSAS.

Eaton